

307. Memorandum From Secretary of State Haig to
President Reagan¹

Washington, May 27, 1982

1. *OAS and Falkland Islands Dispute.* The first day of the reconvened Rio Treaty meeting of Foreign Ministers witnessed a procession of speakers, headed by Argentine Foreign Minister Costa Mendez, who criticized harshly the US for its support of Great Britain and called for OAS action in support of Argentina, including condemnation of the UK, lifting of US "sanctions," and cessation of US materiel support for the British. Venezuela, Panama and Peru were also critical. Nicaragua was vitriolic. More moderate expressions came later from Colombia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Costa Rica. I reiterated the US commitment to a strong inter-American system but rejected the argument that UK action constituted "aggression by an extra-continental power" as defined in the Rio Treaty.² (U)

[Omitted here is material unrelated to the conflict in the South Atlantic.]

¹ Source: Department of State, Executive Secretariat, Very Sensitive Correspondence Files of Alexander M. Haig, Jr., 1981-1982, Lot 83D288, Evening Reading—May 1982. Secret.

² See footnote 3, Document 305. Haig also held bilateral meetings with Zambrano and Arias Stella in his office at the Department of State, May 27. Meeting before the OAS meeting, Zambrano and Haig discussed Venezuelan "concerns about damage to hemispheric and bilateral relations caused by the continuing warfare and the Latin American perception of all-out US support for the UK." Haig responded "that we have not taken sides on the merits of sovereignty in the Falklands and have done our best to avoid favoring either party," and while acknowledging fuel transfers to the United Kingdom, added that "newspaper reports of various weapons transfers to the forces are incorrect." (Telegram 149225 to Caracas, June 1; Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820284-0988) Haig and Arias Stella discussed the need for a solution "ASAP," and discussed "possibilities for a peace-keeping force which could supervise the administration of the Islands." (Telegram 149224 to Lima, June 1; Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820284-1002)